

## Turkey and Mississippi: A Job-Creating Economic Partnership



Mississippi imports more from Turkey than from any other MENA country besides Israel.

Mississippi is home to more than 400 Turkish Americans, many of whom are small business owners.

Jackson has most of the state's Turkish American population.

Turkey imports more from Mississippi than any other country in the MENA region.

In 2019, Turkey imported \$117 million worth of goods and services from Mississippi, almost \$40 million more than in 2016.

Turkish companies, like Yilport, are creating jobs in Mississippi.



The graphic to the right shows the locations of three companies in Mississippi that have close ties to Turkey, including those with Turkish or Turkish-American ownership or Mississippi companies that are reliant on importing from or exporting to Turkey. These include:

- Yilport Holdings, owned by one of Turkey's largest conglomerates, recently signed an expansion agreement with the Mississippi State Port Authority as part of a \$570 million restoration project at the port of Gulfport.
- Northrop Grumman Ship Systems which has had a number of contracts with Turkey, including for a variety of communication, navigation, and radar systems.
- An international market in Jackson, which imports a lot of its goods from Turkey.



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Mississippi's economic ties to Turkey have brought new markets to some of the state's biggest companies, provided the state's businesses with vital goods and services, and, most importantly, have created hundreds of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in investment for the people of Mississippi.



#### **Yilport Holdings: Gulfport**

In April 2018, Mississippi State Port Authority and Turkish firm Yilport Holdings signed an expansion deal as part of an ongoing \$570 million restoration project.

Yilport will invest in facilities and equipment upgrades as part of a lease agreement with the Port Authority.

It plans to grow the volume of refrigerated goods from its Ecuador and Peru terminals through Gulfport to the Midwest.



#### **Northrop Grumman Ship Systems: Pascagoula**

Northrop Grumman has headquartered the operations for its small and medium shipping products in Pascagoula since 1938.

Turkey has been one of the company's biggest customers in this sector, and over the past fifteen years has purchases a whole range of vessels and systems. These include integrated bridge systems, radar systems, electronic navigation and communication systems, and other software.



#### **Aladdin: Jackson**

Aladdin consists of a restaurant, cafe, and a grocery store, which sells food products imported from Turkey and other countries in the region.

They also provide catering services.

Aladdin plays a big role in the local community, donating hot meals to those in need as part of Bilal Qizilbash's "R U Hungry?" initiative.

### **Mississippi: Home to a Turkish-American Success Story**



In May 2007, the Turkish-American community celebrated the historical achievement of Halil Suleyman Ozderen, who became the first American of Turkish descent to become a United States District Judge. He was appointed by President George W. Bush as a judge of the District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi.

Judge Ozerden is a second generation Turkish American, son of a prominent psychologist in Gulfport, MS. After graduating from Gulfport High School in 1985, at the top of his class, Judge Ozerden attended Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service on a Navy ROTC scholarship, graduating magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa in 1989. He then served six years active duty as a commissioned officer and naval flight officer in the U.S. Navy, where he achieved the rank of lieutenant as an A-6E Intruder bombardier/navigator. He was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal for missions flown over Iraq during Operation Southern Watch and Somalia during Operation Restore Hope.

Returning from military duty, Judge Ozerden earned his law degree from Stanford Law School. Following law school, he clerked for the Honorable Eldon Fallon, U.S. District Court Judge in New Orleans, before returning home to Gulfport to work at one of Gulf Coast's most respected law firms. Judge Ozerden has also been a dedicated community leader and volunteer which resulted in his selection as one of the Top Ten South Mississippi Business Leaders Under 40 (2004).



## Turkey and South Dakota: A Job-Creating Economic Partnership



South Dakota imports more from Turkey than from any other MENA country besides Israel.

Around 300 Turkish Americans live in the state; many are small business owners.

Sioux Falls and Rapid City have most of the state's Turkish American population.

Turkey is the third biggest importer from South Dakota in the MENA region, after Israel and Egypt.

Turkish companies, such as AKY Technology, have strong business partnerships in South Dakota.

South Dakota Pulse Producers use equipment produced in Turkey in their plant in Harrold.



The graphic to the right shows the locations of two companies operating in South Dakota that have close ties to Turkey, they include:

- A restaurant owned and run by local Turkish Americans.
- A food processing plant that uses Turkish equipment and expertise.



### South Dakota Pulse Producers: Harrold

In 2016, South Dakota Pulse Producers successfully completed the construction of a new processing plant in Harrold. This was made possible with the equipment and engineering expertise of AKY Technology, a family-owned business from Mersin, Turkey.

Hasan Karacol, a Turkish-American employee of AKY Technology, supervised construction as an on-site consultant.



### The Gyro Hub: Rapid City

The Gyro Hub was opened in January 2015 by two Turkish-American sisters, Nihal and Mine Ozel.

The restaurant was started after Nobel's husband, an Air Force mechanic, transferred to Ellsworth Air Force Base.

The restaurant seats 75 and currently has four employees.

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